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(51) INT CL<sup>6</sup>  
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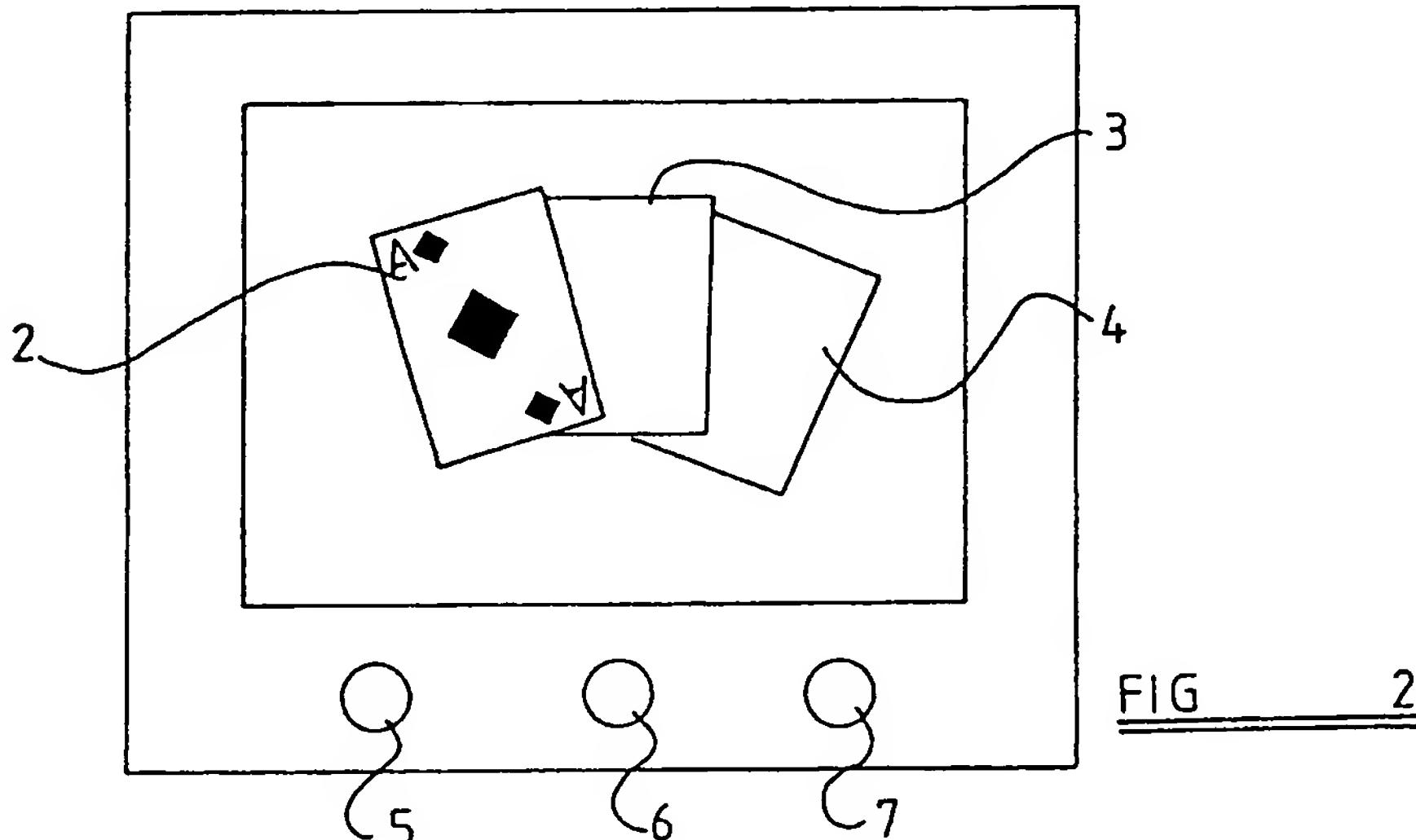
(52) UK CL (Edition K)  
G4V VAA V119

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GB 2214389 A

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INT CL<sup>6</sup> G07F 17/32  
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**(54) Coin-free amusement machines**

(57) A coin or token free machine comprising display means, means to cause the display means to display an image representative of the back faces of a plurality of playing cards 2-4, means, eg buttons 5-7 or touch sensitive areas, to enable a player to select one of the playing cards and means, responsive to that selection, to cause the display means to display the image of the front face of the selected card, the machine being adapted to award a prize if a card of a predetermined face value is selected. At an initial stage shuffling of the cards may be displayed. The card display may be a feature incorporated in a conventional amusement machine.



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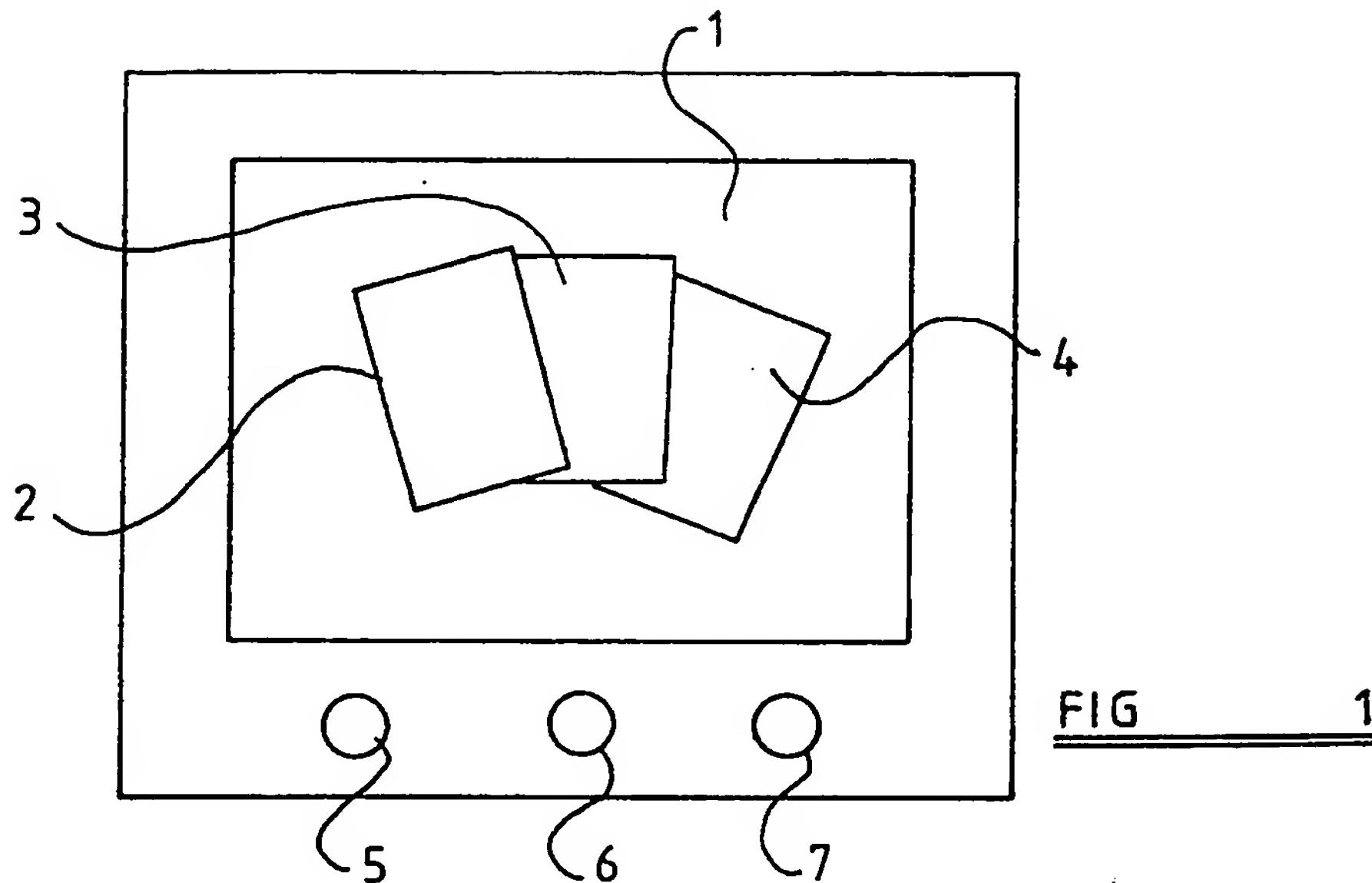


FIG 1

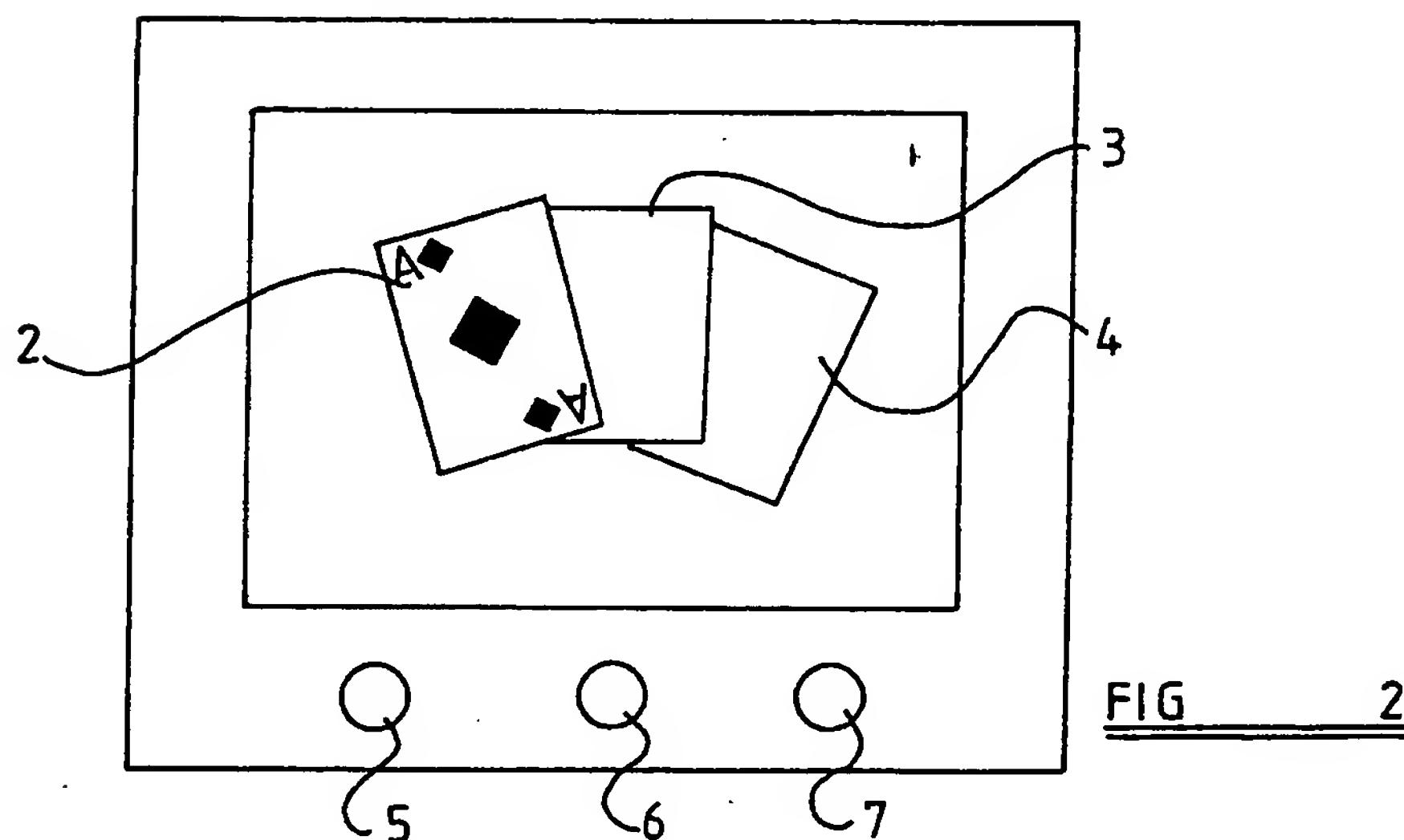
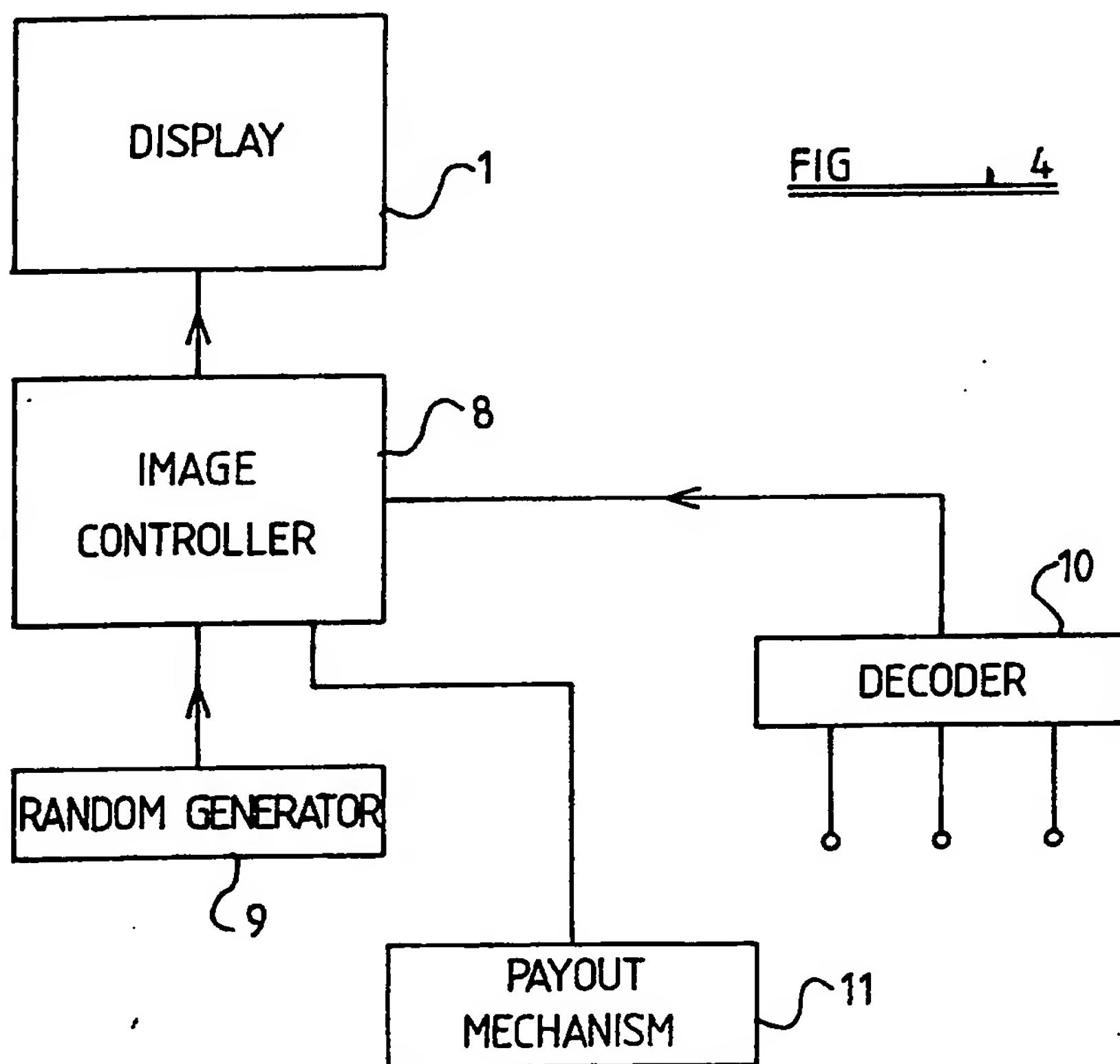
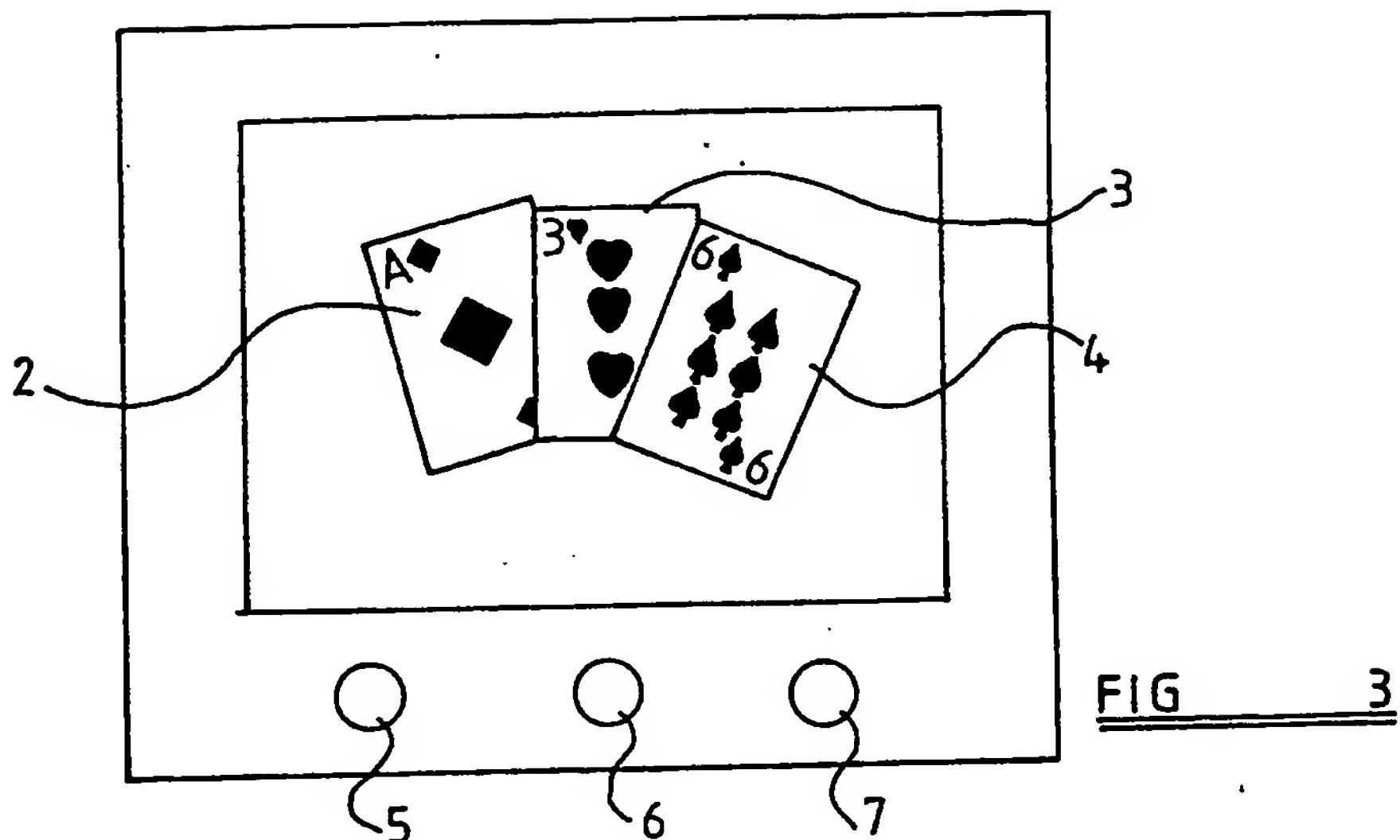


FIG 2

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PATENTS ACT 1977

P6069GB/NF/mkf

## Description of Invention

"Improvements in or relating to a coin or token freed machine"

THIS INVENTION relates to a coin or token freed machine and more particularly relates to a coin or token freed machine of the amusement with prizes or gaming machine type. It is to be understood that the phrase coin or token freed machine includes any appropriate credit freed machine.

It has been found that people who utilise amusement with prize machines or gaming machines appreciate the presence, on the machine, of one or more "features". A feature, in such a context, is a routine that the machine goes through under certain circumstances, for example if a player secures a "win" or secures a certain number of "points" during a preceding routine. The present invention primarily seeks to provide such a "feature" which can be incorporated in and otherwise conventional machine, but it is to be appreciated that a machine in accordance with the invention may possess merely the "feature" of the invention and this may prove sufficient for a simple machine.

According to this invention there is provided a coin or token freed machine comprising display means, means to cause the display means to display an image representative of the back faces of a plurality of playing cards, means to enable a player to select one of the playing cards and means, responsive to that selection, to cause the display means to display the image of the front face of the selected card, the machine

being adapted to award a prize if a card of a predetermined face value is selected.

5 Preferably the image of three cards is present on the display.

Conveniently the display is caused to provide, at an initial stage, representation of the cards being shuffled.

10 Advantageously the means for selecting a card comprise a plurality of push buttons, one push button corresponding to each card present on the display.

15 Preferably the said means for selecting a card comprise touch of sensitive areas provided on the display means overlying the images of the card, there being a separate area for each respective card.

20 In order that the invention may be more readily understood, and so that further features thereof may be appreciated, the invention will now be described, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

25 Figure 1 is a representation of a display of an amusement-with-prizes or gaming machine, at the commencement of a feature, illustrating various control buttons;

30 Figure 2 is a view corresponding to Figure 1 illustrating the machine at a subsequent stage during the feature;

35 Figure 3 is a further view illustrating the machine at a final stage during the feature; and

Figure 4 is a block diagrammatic view of the control arrangement for the machine.

Referring initially to Figure 1 part of a coin or token freed machine, such as an amusement-with-prizes machine or a gaming machine is illustrated comprising a display 1 which may be a cathode ray tube or monitor and three control buttons 2, 3, 4. The cathode ray tube is illustrated as displaying image representative of the backs of three playing cards 5, 6, 7. The display is such that the backs of the three cards can each be clearly seen, but the faces of the cards are concealed. During an initial stage of the feature the visual image is controlled so that it appears that the cards are being shuffled. The cards may merely be moved from one position to another or an image of hands, shuffling the cards, may be provided. However, at the end of the shuffling procedure the cards are again in the position illustrated in Figure 1.

A person playing the feature is aware of the fact that one of the cards has a predetermined value. Thus the card may be an Ace or may be, more traditionally, a Queen. The player has to indicate which of the three cards is the card having this predetermined face value. In this embodiment the invention is achieved by pressing the button 2, 3 or 4 underneath the selected card 5, 6 or 7, respectively. When the button has been pressed the image presented on the cathode ray tube changes, to have the appearance as shown in Figure 2. In Figure 2 the left-hand button 5 has been pressed and on the display, the left-hand card 2 has been inverted, so that the face is now visible. It can be seen that the left-hand card 2 is indeed the Ace. At this stage in the feature a prize may be awarded in the conventional way. Also the remaining two cards 3 and 4 will be inverted so that the player can see where the other two cards were positioned.

If a player pressed the button relating to a card other than the Ace, initially that card would be effectively turned face up in the image provided on the display 1 and subsequently the other two cards would be 5 turned face up but in this case no prize would be awarded.

It is to be appreciated that many modifications may be effected to the arrangement described. For example in 10 a preliminary stage of the feature the cards may be face up, so that the player can clearly see that either the Ace or the Queen is present in the three cards.

The images displayed on the cathode ray tube 15 display 1 are generated by means of an image controller 8 illustrated in Figure 4. The image controller is connected to a random number generator 9 which is adapted to generate a random number between 1 and 6. Depending upon which random number is generated, so the image 20 controller positions the Ace (or Queen) to become card 5, 6 or 7 and also positions the other two cards appropriately. It is to be understood that there are only six possible combinations of positions for the cards. It can be seen that the three control buttons 2, 25 3 and 4 are each connected to a decoder 10, the output of which is connected to the image controller 8 such that whenever a button is pressed, the appropriate card is inverted.

30 The image controller 8, which may be an appropriately programmed microprocessor, is also connected to control a payout mechanism 11.

Whilst the invention has been described with 35 reference to one specific embodiment it is to be appreciated that many modifications may be effected, without departing from the scope of the invention. For

example, whilst three buttons have been illustrated for use in selecting a card to be inverted, instead a touch sensitive display screen may be utilised, so that the player may merely tap the area of the screen where the 5 card that he wishes to be inverted is located, causing that card to be inverted. Other modifications will suggest themselves to those skilled in the art.

CLAIMS:

1. A coin or token freed machine comprising display means, means to cause the display means to display an image representative of the back faces of a plurality of playing cards, means to enable a player to select one of  
5 the playing cards and means, responsive to that selection, to cause the display means to display the image of the front face of the selected card, the machine being adapted to award a prize if a card of a predetermined face value is selected.  
10
2. A machine according to claim 1, wherein the image of three cards is present on the display.
3. A machine according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein  
15 the display is caused to provide, at an initial stage, representation of the cards being shuffled.
4. A machine according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the means for selecting a card comprise a plurality of push buttons, one push button corresponding  
20 to each card present on the display.
5. A machine according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the said means for selecting a card comprise  
25 touch of sensitive areas provided on the display means overlying the images of the cards, there being a separate area for each respective card.
6. A coin or token freed machine substantially as  
30 herein described with reference to and as shown in the accompanying drawings.
7. Any novel feature or combination of features disclosed herein.

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